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I must pass over the chapters on "euphony" and on "style," and, with particular regret, the three chapters on "the history of English prose" to its culmination respectively in the tenth, fifteenth, and nineteenth centuries, "epochs at which," thinks Prof. Earle, "the language has culminated into a standard—a standard which has retained its literary value for generations and for centuries." This is one of the most interesting and instructive sections of the book, but I have already prolonged this notice to greater length than I intended, and must bring it to a close. Enough has been said to show that this work is a book that cannot be neglected by any student of English prose. It does not follow that every reader will agree with all of Prof. Earle's views, but he should, at least, know what they are, and be able to give his reasons for disagreement. The final chapter contains some practical advice on the art of writing, and amongst much that is good the following sentence may serve as a fitting close to this notice: "The fact is that, next after rudimentary grammar and the perusal of good authors, philology is precisely the study that is required by him who would qualify himself in earnest for the practical art of writing English."

JAMES M. GARNETT.

A Middle-English Dictionary, containing words used by English writers from the twelfth to the fifteenth century. By FRANCIS HENRY STRATMANN. A new edition, re-arranged, revised, and enlarged. By HENRY BRADLEY. Oxford, At the Clarendon Press, 1891 (pp. xxiii, 708).

Stratmann's "Dictionary of the Old-English Language," as it was formerly called, has been before the public for many years, the third edition having been published in 1878, and a supplement issued in 1881. After the death of Dr. Stratmann, in 1884, the copyright of the work was acquired by the Delegates of the Clarendon Press, and they entrusted to Mr. Bradley the preparation of a new edition of the dictionary, for which Dr. Stratmann left considerable materials. The present edition is not, however, a mere reprint of the old work, with the use of Dr. Stratmann's materials. Mr. Bradley has improved the work in several respects, which may be briefly summed up, after his own statements, as follows:

1. An intelligible meaning in Modern English has been supplied to every word, as Dr. S. had in many cases given only the Latin equivalent or the English cognate.

2. The arrangement of words has been greatly improved, having been made strictly alphabetical, and not by prefixes, as in the old book, which sometimes necessitated the looking in three or four places to find a word, unless the student was so well acquainted with the etymology of the word that he knew just where to look.

3. Where a foreign word has come into English by different channels and with different meanings, as from Norman-French and classical Latin, the words have been separated.

4. Words in primitive Teutonic beginning with *hl-*, *hn-*, *hr-*, where the *h* has been dropped in M. E., have been placed under *l*, *n*, and *r* respectively, and the *h* prefixed in italics.

5. A very important and useful change is the notation of the M. E. quantity. This defect in Morris and Skeat's "Specimens of Early English" has

been felt, I presume, by every student who has used those books. The quantity is marked in Sweet's Primers, but the specimens given in them are so brief that they cannot take the place of the fuller works.

6. The diacritic *û* has been used to mark a M. E. *u* descended from O. E. *y*, or a similar sound, and Mr. B. regrets that he has not made further use of diacritics.

7. In the etymologies direct derivation and collateral relationship of words have been distinguished, and some errors of detail rectified.

8. Another important improvement made by Mr. B. is the insertion of many Romance words omitted by Dr. S., who directed his chief attention to the Teutonic portion of the language. Surely the words of Romanic origin should also be included. Mr. B. states, however, that "in the selection of new words for insertion he does not profess to have followed any systematic method." He also says, that "while he has not expunged the proper names inserted by the author himself, he has not added any others." It seems to me that the insertion of proper names is desirable, if not in the body of a dictionary, at least in a special appendix. The student will frequently want information on the subject, and will have to consult some other work, with the chance of not finding what he wants.

The above-mentioned improvements all increase the value of the dictionary, and Mr. B. deserves the thanks of students for them. Testing the list of works referred to in order to see what additions have been made, I find under the letter A alone, thirty-four titles instead of twenty-two in the last edition. Similarly examining a single page (p. 20) under A, I find two Romance words added, *ambler* and *dme*. It is possible that these may be found in Dr. S.'s supplement of 1881, to which I have not access, my edition being the third (1878) without supplement. Examining some of these words for additional references, I find *five* instead of *two* under *alure*, sb. These entries may here be compared to illustrate the difference between the two editions.

Old edition: "**alure**, O. Fr. *alure* (*allure*), Prompt. 10; *alur(e)s* (pl.), Rob. 192."

New edition: "**alure**, sb., O. Fr. *alure*, *aleure*; *place to walk in, passage, gallery*, Alis. 7210; Guy, p. 85; **Pr. P. 10**: **alur(e)s** (pl.), Rob. 192; throu the aleris of his soler '*per cancellos coenaculi sui*,' Wicl. 4 Kings i. 2."

The improvement in the new edition is here manifest. The passage from Wiclif is given in A. V., "through a lattice in his upper chamber," and R. V. merely substitutes 'the' for 'a.'

If we examine *soler*, we find the English meaning added, "*upper chamber, summer room*," and two references from Trevisa, making *seven* for the *five* of the old edition. In both appears "Wicl. Josh. ii. 6," which is in the Vulgate "*in solarium domus suae*," and in A. V., "up to the roof of the house," where R. V. omits "of the house."

The next word to *alure*, *alûten*, illustrates the improvement in arrangement, for here in the old edition we must look back to the list of words under the O. E. prefix *a*, which is distinct from the O. Fr. prefix *a*; and this improvement is still further shown by *amaïen*, for which in the old edition we must look, not under the O. Fr. prefix *a*, although there is an O. Fr. form *amaier*, but under O. Fr. *es-* (Lat. *ex*), for O. F. *esmaier* is the older form; here, too, we find *four*

references for *two* in the old edition. Without pursuing this examination further, it is hoped that this is sufficient to show the decided improvements of the present edition made by Mr. Bradley.

The editor prefixes a "Comparative Table of References to Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*," showing the correspondences of the Chaucer Society's Six-Text edition, which is cited under the words, with Tyrwhitt's, Wright's, Morris's, and Bell and Skeat's editions, so that the possessor of any one of those editions has an easy means of reference to any passage cited. A "List of General Abbreviations and Signs" is also prefixed, and some five pages of "Additions and Corrections" appended. For these the editor makes due apology, and particularly for the errors of the press, but no one who has ever carried a book, or even an article, through the press will criticise these very severely. It is undoubtedly the duty of an editor to exercise all reasonable care against such errors, but when, after repeated re-reading of the proof-sheets, especially such difficult proofs as those of a dictionary, errors will crop out, they must be leniently judged. I am sure that all scholars will be greatly indebted to Mr. Bradley for the labor he has bestowed upon this valuable work. Until the completion of Maetzner's greater dictionary, which, after many years of labor, has reached only the letter J, there is nothing to take its place. It may be confidently commended to all students of Middle-English.

JAMES M. GARNETT.

English Miracle Plays, Moralities and Interludes: Specimens of the Pre-Elizabethan Drama. Edited, with an Introduction, Notes, and Glossary, by ALFRED W. POLLARD, M.A. Oxford, At the Clarendon Press, 1890 (pp. lx, 250).

Mr. Pollard thinks that "the small attention devoted to the pre-Elizabethan drama in all histories of English literature is the best excuse for the appearance of the present volume of Specimens," and he is certainly right. Until the publication of Miss L. T. Smith's edition of the York Plays in 1885, the student was practically without the means of making himself acquainted with these interesting relics of the older English drama, for the old editions of the Chester, Towneley, and Coventry Plays were out of print, and virtually inaccessible to the private student. Here we have in convenient form a small volume with sufficient specimens to enable a student to acquaint himself practically with these plays. Mr. Pollard makes selections from each of the four series above-mentioned, and from eight other plays: *Mary Magdalene*, *The Castell of Perseverance*, *Everyman*, *Interlude of the Four Elements*, *Skelton's Magnyfycence*, *Heywood's The Pardoner and the Frere*, *Thersytes*, and *Bale's King John*. The introduction is sufficiently full, beginning with the *Χριστὸς Πάσχων*, attributed by all previous historians of the drama to the church father of the fourth century, Gregory of Nazianzus, but now denied to him, after the investigations of Dr. J. G. Brambs (1885), and assigned to the tenth century. The contemporary Latin plays, after Terence, of *Hroswitha*, the nun of Gandersheim, are duly noticed, but set aside as "exotics," "having nothing to do with the services of the Church."

The Miracle Plays, however, had their origin in the representations of scenes from the life of our Lord, made at the Easter services some time during the